

In the Claims:

Listing of claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): An electric toothbrush comprising a housing formed from a first material and including a handle, a brush head, and a neck extending between said handle and said brush head and a positionable actuator disposed in said housing for controlling operation of said toothbrush, characterized in that said housing further includes a first gripping member disposed along an exterior region of said housing, said first gripping member formed from a second material softer than said first material, said first gripping member having a generally convex shape contoured to match said housing and a first substantially concave recessed region on an exposed exterior surface thereof, and a second gripping member having a generally convex shape contoured to match said housing and formed from said second material, said second gripping member defining a second substantially concave recessed region on an exposed exterior surface thereof, whereby said first and second recessed regions are useful in assisting a user to grasp the handle during use of the toothbrush, said first and second gripping members and said first and second substantially concave recessed regions thereof having generally oval shapes when viewed in a plan view, said first and second substantially concave, generally oval recessed regions are concavely shaped along both their major and minor axes.

Claim 2 (Original): The electric toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said housing of said toothbrush defines a longitudinal axis, and said first and said second gripping members are symmetrically disposed on said housing with respect to said longitudinal axis.

Claim 3 (Original): The electric toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said first gripping member has a length of from about 25 mm to about 65 mm, and a width of from about 12 mm to about 25 mm.

Claim 4 (Original): The electric toothbrush of claim 3 wherein said first recessed region has a length of from about 25 mm to about 38 mm, a width of from about 9 mm to about 15 mm, and a depth of from about 3 mm to about 10 mm.

Claim 5 (Original): The electric toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said second material has a Shore A hardness between about 30 and about 99.

Claim 6 (Original): The electric toothbrush of claim 1 wherein each of said first and second gripping members is formed from a material selected from the group consisting of elastomers and rubber-based materials.

Claim 7 (Previously presented): An electric toothbrush comprising a housing formed from a first material and including a handle, a brush head, and a neck extending between said handle and said brush head and a positionable actuator disposed in said housing for controlling operation of said toothbrush, characterized in that said housing further includes a first gripping member disposed along an exterior region of said housing, said first gripping member formed

from a second material softer than said first material, said first gripping member having a generally convex shape contoured to match said housing and a first substantially concave recessed region on an exposed exterior surface thereof, a second gripping member having a generally convex shape contoured to match said housing and formed from said second material, said second gripping member defining a second substantially concave recessed region on an exposed exterior surface thereof, whereby said first and second recessed regions are useful in assisting a user to grasp the handle during use of the toothbrush, said first and second gripping members and said first and second substantially concave recessed regions thereof having generally oval shapes when viewed in a plan view, and a third gripping member disposed along an exterior region of said housing between said first and second gripping members, said positionable actuator is disposed in said third gripping member.

Claim 8 (Cancelled) .

Claim 9 (Original): The electric toothbrush of claim 7 wherein said third gripping member is formed from a material having a Shore A hardness between about 30 and about 99.

Claim 10 (Cancelled).

Claim 11 (Cancelled).

Claim 12 (Cancelled).

Claim 13 (Previously presented): The electric toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said first and second gripping members are separate and distinct from each other.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): The electric toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said first and second gripping members are symmetrically disposed on a rearward side of said housing so that said toothbrush may be used by both left-handed and right-handed individuals.

Claim 15 (Cancelled).